Halloween should not be banned from elementary schools. October 31, is a special day which allows free expression of creativity. It is a time of year when kids are able to dress up as monsters, characters from television, and other __ingenious__ costumes while roaming the streets at night collecting delectable sweets. Parents even enjoy the festivities by decorating, attending parties, and reverting back to the child within themselves. However, Halloween has suddenly appeared on the endangered list of celebrated holidays in schools. Ruth Ravve of Fox News reported that due to cultural issues, safety, and even economy, schools and towns across the country are banning Halloween plans. Although there is growing concern over the issue of celebrating Halloween in schools, it is really only about fun, dressing up to express creativity, and is celebrated just once a year.

For many years, Halloween has been considered a fun holiday, having no affiliation with religious or cultural beliefs. Parents and children view Halloween as a day of frightening parties, haunted houses, candy, and imaginative costumes. The article states that one student posted online, "Why suck the fun out of school? Halloween isn't a religious or political holiday; it's only about having fun." Schools that ban Halloween festivities, take away students' right to have pleasurable entertainment at school. Another student posted online, "It's the best part of the school year. Everyone dresses up and gives out candy. How can that be bad?" In some states Halloween is banned because principals worry that those students whose culture or religion don't allow them to celebrate would feel excluded from the others. Principal Brian Anderson in Portland, Oregon told the local newspaper, "We're pushing our traditions on an ever-changing population." In contrast, the reverse is true as well. Why should those individuals with different beliefs force others to forsake their cultural and __religious__ traditions? Sue Afryl, a parent, commented, "What this ban is teaching is intolerance....By banning one or all we teach not to be accepting of cultural and religious beliefs other than our own....They have now taught intolerance! A lesson no child should ever be given." Diverse religious and cultural beliefs should not be an excuse to ban Halloween.

Halloween is a time for children to express their creativity through a variety of costumes. Children enjoy choosing or making costumes that represent their individuality. The article written by Ruth Ravve quoted parents and students saying that, "Halloween is a secular holiday, and
one which allows children to express their creativity through costumes and designs." Dressing up is a tradition that students look forward to on Halloween. Julia Schall, a third-grader at Ralph Waldo Emerson Elementary School expressed her disappointment for the ban on Halloween festivities, by saying, "I'm so sad. I have my Power Ranger costume all ready." Wearing Halloween costumes at school offers students a break from the normal school day. They delight in seeing their friends' costumes throughout the daily activities of school. Also, many schools have assemblies or parades where students can proudly show off their costumes to other children and parents. Prohibiting Halloween causes students to miss out on creative expression of individuality.

A holiday which happens only once a year, such as Halloween, should be celebrated to its fullest. Administrators say school is not the place for Halloween, and at least some parents agree. While school is typically set apart for educating children, it is certainly appropriate to allow a break from tradition. Most students and parents agree that since Halloween occurs only once a year, schools should be allowed to celebrate. Despite what was told to Fox News, "While education can be, and is, creative and fun--we must respond to the current national reality of high stakes testing. Until No Child Left Behind is rewritten into legislation that is reflective of individual student progress and achievement, the consequences will continue to become more severe." One might respond commenting that one day of fun and games at school is not going to ruin a child's education.

"Whether you believe in something or not, is it correct to ban it? Is it right to suppress it?" complained Afryl to Fox News. Halloween is a non-religious holiday and should be sanctioned in any school despite other's religious or cultural beliefs. A child who does not believe in celebrating Halloween is able to excuse themselves from the festivities, just as a child who does believe should be allowed to participate. Not permitting celebration of certain holidays in schools because one might offend another's beliefs is reverse discrimination. Some critics have stated, "Now with the non-religious holiday of Halloween being banned, it is political correctness gone too far." In order to be fair to all, schools can continue to celebrate Halloween and offer another area of the school to those who choose not to participate. Elementary schools should not ban Halloween based on others' religious and cultural beliefs; it is only a day to dress up creatively and collect candy once a year.
Scores

This essay's total score is 30.

The essay was scored by PEG, the automated essay scorer, according to the scoring standard for your level. Any trait score below 3 shows a need to strengthen skills in that category.

Writing Analysis

Development of Ideas

You scored 5 out of 5

EVALUATION

- Your ideas are powerful and well-supported.
- Your essay or story holds the reader's attention through reasons, facts, examples, details, and/or description that enrich the main idea or story's plot.
- Your writing is clear, focused and controlled.
- Your essay or story moves smoothly from introduction to conclusion.

LESSONS

Elaboration in Narratives

Organization

You scored 5 out of 5

EVALUATION

- Your essay is carefully organized with well-placed details from beginning to end.
- You have organized your writing in a way that highlights your main idea and makes it stronger.
- Your linking words and phrases are used in a smooth and expert way.
- The writing is well-balanced and moves along smoothly.
- The organization of this essay enhances and highlights the main idea.

LESSONS

Narrative Transitions

Style

You scored 5 out of 5

EVALUATION

- You speak directly to the audience through expressive and engaging writing.
- The language is natural and brings the topic to life.
- The reader feels a strong sense of interaction with the writer and senses the person behind the words.

Word Choice

You scored 5 out of 5

EVALUATION

- The words convey the intended message in an interesting and precise way.
- Word choice is specific and accurate.
- Your vocabulary is vivid, natural and not overdone.
- Excellent word choice gives this essay power.

LESSONS
Sentence Structure

EVALUATION

- The writing in this essay sounds natural and smooth.
- The differences in the way sentences are written make this essay or story interesting.
- You have written clearly and expertly, without being wordy.

LESSONS
Run-Ons  Fragments  Sentence Variety

Conventions

EVALUATION

- You have shown that you understand spelling, punctuation and capitalization rules.
- This essay or story is long enough and is written at a high level, showing that you use grammar, punctuation and capitalization to make your writing more exciting.
- Mistakes in spelling, grammar and punctuation are few, if any, and they do not make it hard to understand your essay or story.

LESSONS
Quotation Marks  Capitalization  Apostrophes

Messages

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